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RESEARCH PROJECTS UNDER WAY, FEBRUARY 1965.

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A REPORT WAS MADE OF RESEARCH PROJECTS UNDERWAY AT THE CENTER FOR THE ADVANCED STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS OF FEBRUARY, 1965. THE CENTER'S RESEARCH EFFORTS FOCUS ON THE SOCIAL CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH THOSE WHO ADMINISTER SCHOOLS AND SYSTEMS MUST WORK. APPENDED TO THE REPORT IS A SERIES OF BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PROJECTS. THESE PROJECTS DEAL WITH SUCH PROBLEMS AS ROLE EXPECTATIONS, EDUCATIONAL MARKET ANALYSIS, COMMUNITY POWER GROUPS, THE WORLD OF THE VOTER, SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS, SCHOOL-BOARD ARENA OF ARGUMENTATION, PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE GROUPS, COMMUNICATION NETS WITHIN FACULTIES, AND MOTIVATIONAL SOURCES OF PROSPECTIVE SUPERINTENDENTS. (GD)

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Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration

University of Oregon

Eugene

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Compiled by P. J. Runkel

The research of this Center is devoted to the social context of educational administration; that is, to the social environments within which those who administer schools and systems must work. There are two aspects to the conditions under which anyone works. On the one hand, there are the objective conditions, such as the amount of money available, the number of people on the staff, the number of rainy days in the year, and the like. On the other hand, there are subjective perceptions of the environment such as the individual's estimation of how ready his colleagues are to accept his judgment, the proportion of the citizenry who are likely to vote for a school bond issue, the manner in which teachers are likely to react to hiring a guidance counselor, and so forth.

There are three important points to be made about these two aspects of the individual's world -- every individual's world. The first point is that the subjective world and the objective world are not completely independent; one can affect the other. The second point is that the objective picture of the world is never quite the same as the individual's subjective picture of it; there is always a discrepancy between the two. And the third point is that the objective world consists not only of sticks, stones, and bones, but also of other people's opinions, the hurts and

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glories they take from the names they are called, and so forth. Consequently, forming an accurate subjective picture of the objective world must include forming an accurate subjective picture of other people's subjective pictures of their worlds.

Returning to my first point, that the subjective world and the objective world affect each other, one easy illustration is the fact that administrators (and housewives, for that matter) do not always manage to live within their objective budgets. When our behavior goes beyond what most people consider real financial boundaries, we can come upon serious frustrations. For an obverse example, we can take the fact that college presidents are noted for going beyond existing financial limitations by hunting up people who are willing to donate money to push back the boundaries of the college president's financial world. Another kind of example is the number of man-hours in a week. Every teacher knows that principals do not compute the number of man-hours of work which can get done by multiplying the number of faculty by the number of hours in a work-week. The subjectivity of needs and goals can stretch the objectivity of the clock. More examples would be easy to find.

The fact that the subjective world can affect the objective world means that both resources and limitations can change. They can change not only through acts of God, but through acts of men -- of administrators, of teachers, of voters. The fact that the objective world can affect the subjective world means that ways can be found to accelerate these effects, enabling the individual's subjective picture of his world to become more

accurate, and in turn enabling him to act more effectively to alter the real world around him.

One of the purposes of our Center, obviously, is to achieve better descriptions of the objective and subjective worlds within which schools exist. If schools are to be managed knowledgeably or changed effectively, then actual, objective limitations must not come as tardy surprises and actual, objective resources must not be overlooked when needed. Parents must not wrongly estimate the number of minutes per child in the teacher's work-week, and teachers must be aware of the varieties of the hopes and fears through which parents see their children. Legislators need to know how an increase in tuition in one part of a state can affect the demand for education in another part, and how federal subsidies for research in their universities can affect the attractiveness of their faculty to universities in other parts of the country. In short, it is our faith that schools can more effectively achieve their goals if more information is made available concerning the resources and limitations, both human and otherwise, both supposed and actual, which help or hinder the pursuit of those goals.

My second point was that no one's subjective picture of the world in which he moves is entirely accurate. All of us lack information about some parts of our environment, and all of us suffer from actual mis-information about some of it. This is the case in the world of the school as elsewhere. It is true that there is a great deal of information about the school and its environments to be found in print and it is true that much

of this information, if it could be made more widely known to those people who need it, would aid greatly in carrying education forward. It is also true, however, that there are great gaps in this literature, and it is further true that some of the assertions in the literature are downright wrong. In filling in needed areas of information, in correcting misconceptions, and in seeking ways of putting information more quickly into the hands of those who need it, our Center has ample work ahead of it.

My third point was that the objective environment is one of people as well as things. Although schools contain books, desks, and pianos, schooling takes place through a pre-eminently social process, and the important environments of schools, too, are social. When a new school is to be built, it is true that a place must be found for it in a geographic environment; but it is sometimes harder to find a place for it in the hearts of parents and taxpayers.

To sum up, a useful way to describe the research being done at our Center is to say that we are trying to draw adequate maps of the objective and subjective worlds in which schools and colleges exist. The maps now available are sketchy and, here and there, erroneous, and we are trying to improve them.

We are trying to draw maps of how money flows in and out of schools and of how students flow in and out of the same schools; maps of how administrators go in and out of the superintendency and of how information goes in and out of the office of the guidance counselor; maps of how teachers visualize their duties and of how parents visualize them; maps

of how members of school boards anticipate the moves of those who oppose them in arguments and of how teachers anticipate the reactions of parents who oppose their political beliefs. The number of such small pieces of maps now being drawn is large, but our hope, of course, is not to collect great bins full of small bits. Rather, our hope is gradually to construct a few large maps of the social environments of schools, each showing reasonable amount of detail and each marked with a number of paths from which the administrator can choose those which are more likely than others to get him where he wants to go.

To say that we are trying to improve the existing maps is not to say that we are trying, ourselves, to improve schools or the environments of schools. This is not our province any more than it is the province of the man who draws the road map to tell you to what city you ought to want to go. We must leave the choice of destination to the philosophers and administrators. Our hope is that some day, when someone tells us his destination, we can tell him which road will be the smoothest. At the present moment, we are at the stage of drawing detail upon some bits and pieces -- pieces which will become parts of the larger maps we hope will take form as we proceed.

So far I have given you a few phrases illustrating some kinds of questions suitable for our Center to investigate, and I have spent some time explaining a metaphor or a manner of thinking which enables me to visualize connections among our varied research projects. That is, I have said that schools operate in a number of objective "small worlds" and

that these objective worlds are represented with varying accuracy (never perfectly) in the subjective "small worlds" of the people who deal with schools or think about them. I have said that it is the job of our Center to draw reasonably good maps of these small worlds, objective and subjective. And I have said that we have barely picked up our pencil and T-square.

Appended to this paper is a series of brief descriptions of research projects now under way. But let me list here, by means of some over-brief phrases, the kinds of "small worlds" in which our researchers are now immersed.

"Small world"	Researcher(s)
Educational "market"	Campbell & Siegel
Role expectations	Foskett & Wolcott Seger
Community power groups	Pellegrin, Carson, & Goldhammer
World of the voter	Croft Rohter
Social molds forming political orientations	Zeigler Goldrich
School-board arena of argumentation	Wrench Lind
Professional reference groups	Carlson Utsey & Schminke
Communication nets within faculties	Runkel
Motivational sources of prospective superintendents	Miner

In addition to these projects, we also have under way a general theoretical project and a methodological one. The array of small worlds being studied at our Center will continually change, of course. They will change because people will conclude present projects and start new ones, and they will also change because new researchers will be added to the Center staff. At the present moment our search for new personnel is in the direction of people to undertake the dissemination aspect of our work; but these people, too, will affect the complexion of the research program.

Finally, I should mention that the problem of making large maps out of small pieces is one which is still being studied at our Center, and we expect to go on thinking about it as long as there is a Center. I do not wish to say that we are pessimistic, but we are well aware that pieces do not fall by themselves into a coherent and beautiful final masterpiece. The problem of pointing the research program and of fitting together the results is one of the special tasks we have marked out for special attention in the coming months.

List of Projects

A "market" analysis of the higher education "industry"

Campbell & Siegel (Economics)

This study will look into the world of supply and demand in respect to higher education. A trial will be made to see whether the framework of marketing economics will make a good map of the relations between the price of higher education and the nature of the demand for it. The study will deal with the price or cost of education to the student, the nature of the education being "marketed" by the institution, "production" costs encountered by the institution, rationing (e.g., enrollment limitations), and subsidies.

Two hypotheses are: (1) Expansion of two-year colleges will tend to increase the over-all excess demand for higher education, both for two-year colleges and for four-year colleges. (2) Where new two-year colleges begin to feed some number of students into four-year colleges, the entrance requirements of the two-year colleges will become more restrictive and more academic.

The community normative structure for roles in the public school

Foskett (Sociology) and Wolcott (Education)

No teacher needs to be told that his world -- his area of free movement -- is circumscribed by the expectations of parents, school board members, principals, other teachers, pupils, and numerous others. This study, says Foskett, will undertake "to map that portion of the normative structure in communities that pertains, directly and indirectly, to public school affairs.

"It is hypothesized that patterns of role expectations will ... indeed ... be part of the role of the subject(s). That is, individuals with professional roles will perceive the role of the teacher, principal, or superintendent differently than will individuals having the role of unskilled employee.

"Further, it is hypothesized that such other variables as role distance, level of information, extent of social participation, and socio-economic status will be related to the way individuals perceive roles, the intensity of role norms, and the extent of consensus within and between populations."

Role expectations and value orientations

Seger (Education)

As do parts of the study by Foskett and Wolcott, this project also seeks an objective map of some subjective maps of a portion of the school system. Two assessments will be taken from (a) board members and (b) teachers: (1) the role expectations each group holds for the superintendent and (2) the value orientations in each group. Hypotheses are (1) that each group -- board members and teachers -- will show consensus within itself in respect to role expectations and also in respect to value orientation, and (2) that the two groups will differ from each other on role expectations and also on values, and (3) going from district to district, it will be found that where there is a large difference between the two groups on role expectations there will also be a large difference on values, and conversely.

Effect of local power structures on educational decision making

Pellegrin (Sociology), Carson (Education), and Goldhammer (Education)

"Research on educational decision-making in the community," say these researchers, "has given insufficient attention to the identification and systematic analysis of the whole range and variety of interest groups in the community that concern themselves with educational decisions...." The "small world" of this study is that of the several power structures in the community which affect local educational policy. Interest groups, of course, can be sometimes a resource for the administrator and sometimes a limitation upon him. This investigation makes use of case histories over six years and from three communities in which the power structures influencing issues of public education can be compared with those influencing issues of the economy, of local government, and of public recreation.

Voting behavior

Croft (Education)

An objective environment of great inportance to school people is that of voters. And the key to altering the resources and limitations in this environment, of course, is to have accurate maps of the various types of subjective worlds of the voters. Considerable work has been done in this direction, though not much in respect to school elections. Croft is bringing together results from studies of other kinds of elections as a step preliminary to designing studies to shed light on the orientations of voters in school elections.

The radical right and negative voting

Rohter (Political Science)

While Croft is surveying existing literature on voting behavior, Rohter is investigating some particular hypotheses. After finding "radical rightists" and "negative voters" by specified procedures and after assessing feelings of political alienation and of general social powerlessness on the part of the subjects, Rohter's three chief hypotheses become: (1) Negative voters, in contrast to positive voters, will express greater feelings of political alienation by voting against school revenue measures. (2) Radical rightists will express feelings of general social powerlessness in their activities, including their opposition to certain school policies. (3) Radical rightists, to a greater extent than positive or negative voters, will share a cognitive structure characterized by ready acceptance of simplistic views, intolerance of ambiguity, and uncritical acceptance of authority-derived beliefs.

Political socialization

Zeigler (Political Science)

Our subjective maps of the worlds we move in do not conveniently spring into being upon demand. They are put together slowly, partly through seeking to understand our own experiences, but to a great degree also by borrowing bits and pieces from other people against a time of need, so to speak. Often we knit together a conceptual garment for some portion of the world around us not so much because of a direct need of our own, but because the people around us are so insistent the Emperor must have clothing. Schools, of course, are notorious for providing children with conceptual frameworks before they have a direct need for them, and it seems a reasonable hypothesis that much preliminary shaping of political orientations takes place in the school. As a first step in studying the process of political socialization, Zeigler is seeking to lay hold of political values which, as he says, "find their way into the school system, not only through the form of curriculum, but perhaps also through the informal and subtle communication of values between teachers and students." The first stage of the study is concentrating on a base-line assessment of the political values and activities of teachers.

Political orientations in Panama and Costa Rica

Goldrich (Political Science)

Like Zeigler's, Goldrich's study also bears upon political socialization. This study, however, focuses upon secondary students from elite families -- the probable inheritors of the "establishment" -- and compares the political orientations of Panamanian students with those of Costa Rican students. Comparison of the results with similar studies done in the United States will help to ascertain the possible ranges of political orientations among adolescents.

Simulated school boards

Wrench (Psychology) and Lind (Political Science)

These two laboratory studies, being conducted independently, are designed around the sequential processes in group decision-making. As such, they will yield objective information on what is likely to lead to what in such discussion. One eventual product of such studies could be a revision of those parts of training programs which deal with the superintendent's relations with the school board. Both studies pay attention, also, to the inaccuracies of members in interpreting the arguments and pressures being brought by other members. Hypotheses deal with situations likely to lead to over-simplified interpretations of the opposition and with methods of rectifying inaccuracies of perception.

Adoption of innovations by superintendents

Carlson (Education)

In explaining the different rates of adopting innovations on the part of different superintendents, Carlson finds that a key factor is the kind of professional world of which the superintendent considers himself a member -- that is, the kind of professional reference group he chooses. Given a type of innovation not prohibitively expensive to adopt, the subjective world of the superintendent can become a factor much more important than objective features of the environment such as the expenditure level of the school district. Carlson is also studying how rates of innovation differ among types of innovation and in different geographic areas.

In other projects, Carlson has been studying succession in the superintendency, and in these studies has also developed concepts drawn from the choice of reference groups by the superintendent.

Personal and professional values

Utsey and Schminke (Education)

This study turns to the varying value-frameworks to be found in a working organization such as a school system, and begins with the general hypothesis that certain value-clusters will be found to characterize occupants of different positions in the organization. A number of hypotheses will be investigated concerning the conflicts among decisions and actions which result from differeing value complexes. A study such as this leads to an objective mapping of the differing subjective maps which individuals use to guide their behavior within the same organizational world.

Communication in high school faculties

Runkel (Psychology)

An individual interacts with his social environment by means of communication, but his frequency of communication with others differs from person to person, as does his purpose in communicating. An important part of the immediate social environment of teacher or administrator is the rest of the faculty. The communication patterns in a faculty offer important resources or put serious limitations on what an administrator can achieve with his school. This study, based on data from 28 secondary schools in Illinois, deals with the actual flow of several

kinds of information within faculties as well as perceptions by teachers of likely sources of information within the faculty. Hypotheses deal with the kinds of persons or positions through which the greater portion of certain kinds of communication are transmitted, the relevance of technical knowledge or certain kinds of attitudes to the content of the information transmitted, and the directions of influence through faculties concerning certain issues, particularly the proper role of the guidance counselor. In a separate laboratory study, Runkel is testing the effect of similarity of cognitive structure on the ease with which complex meanings are transmitted from one person to another.

Selection of school administrators

Miner (Business Administration)

This study deals with the ever-present problem of selecting the right persons for educational administration, and turns to that part of the subjective world of potential administrators having to do with power motivation and with conformity to norms. The object is to see to what extent selection devices useful in business and industry can be applied to the educational setting.

Organizational behavior

Hills (Education)

Any mapping of the small worlds containing a school system must itself have some sort of framework upon which it can be built. For such a purpose we turn to available theories of behavior in groups and organizations, or to other types of theory, or we try to build a theory of our own. Part of the Center's effort should go to abstract work in theory-building, and Hills is working on an adaptation of the conceptual scheme of Talcott Parsons.

Illegitimate sanctions

Goldrich, Goldstein, and Agger (Political Science)

This project is a methodological one devoted to constructing an instrument to assess various types of perceptions of sanctions. The instrument is intended for future use in studies of citizens' expectations of illegitimate sanctions upon their political behavior and of the conditions under which political leaders use illegitimate sanctions. Eventually, the instrument might be used in the form of an interview schedule, a self-administered questionnaire, or both.

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